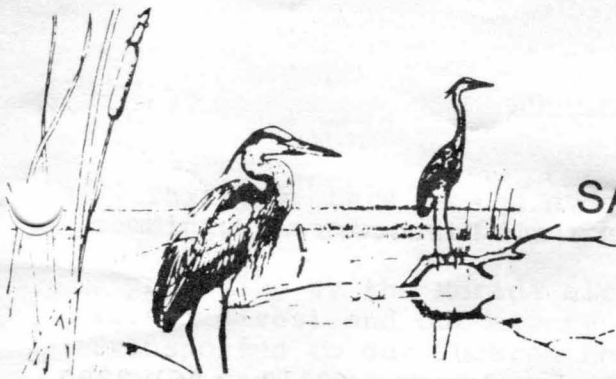




SAINT LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY

BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1980

OKEFENOKEE, LAND OF TREMBLING EARTH

presented by Dennis Holt, Friday, September 26, Ethical Society, 8:15 p.m.

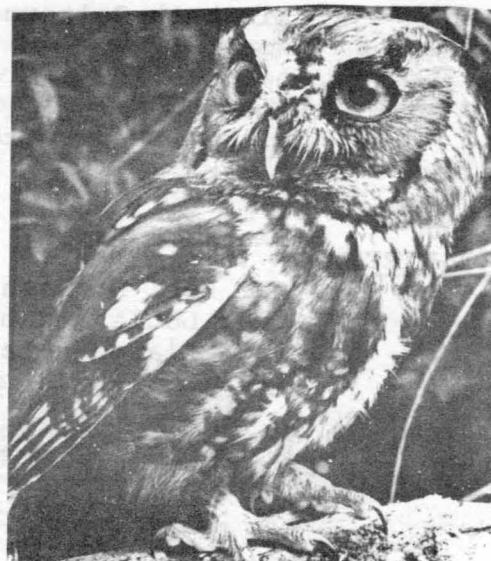
The Okefenokee Swamp in southeastern Georgia is one of the largest and most primitive swamps in the United States. It is a vast peat bog, unique in geologic origin and history, with many unusual forms of plant and animal life. Once a part of the ocean, it is now more than 100 feet above sea level.

Choctaw Indians called it Okefenokee, "the place of the trembling earth," because the marshy land seems to quake underfoot. What appears to be solid ground is actually a collection of floating peat islands anchored only by roots and vegetation.

Okefenokee has a prolific variety of plant life, with over 300 flowering shrubs alone. The beauty these shrubs give the swamp is complemented by moss draped cypress trees which also contribute to the air of mystery of this ancient wilderness. The mood is considerably enhanced by the presence and bellows of alligators.

The swamp is also the habitat of many brilliantly plumed birds and is one of the few remaining breeding grounds of the Florida Sandhill Crane. While Okefenokee Swamp was at one time threatened by human exploitation, it is now a national wildlife refuge and was given greater protection by the Eastern Wilderness Bill which designated 83% of the 412,000 acres as a protected area.

We welcome you to this outstanding film, narrated by the photographer, Dennis Holt. This is the opening of the thirty-eighth season of the Audubon Wildlife Film Series presented by the Saint Louis Audubon Society.



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Saint Louis Audubon Society Headquarters
2109 Briargate Lane, Kirkwood, Missouri 63122
(314) 965-8642

AUDUBON GROUP TOURS YUCATAN

Thirty members of the Audubon Society toured Yucatan in mid-March combining interests of ornithology and archaeology.

Arriving at the Merida airport we were welcomed by melodious blackbirds (Dives dives) and our expert guide, Pablo Ribas, birdman of the Yucatan. Transported to our Yucatan home, the Hacienda Inn, a colonial inn with a lovely patio and pool, and armed with Peterson's "Birds of Mexico" and a Texas bird guide, we quickly began to experience Mexico bird life.

Up at 5 a.m., each morning we combined birding with tours of the spectacular Mayan ruins of Uxmal, Chichen-Itza and Dzibilchaltun. So much was experienced it is difficult to describe the wonders of the mysterious Maya.

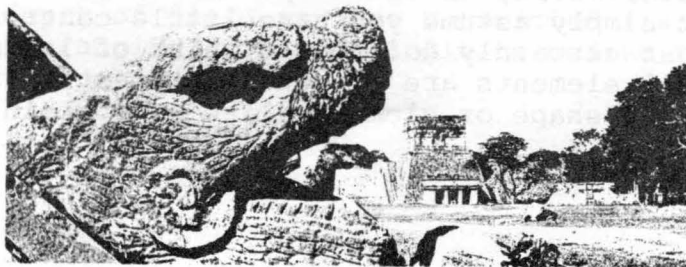
A great blue heron led our boats upriver between banks of the tangled green jungle with the Magnificent Frigatebirds soaring overhead for our first view of thousands of flamingos. We visited a waterhole with an abundance of new birds, including the Singing quail (*Dactylortyx thoracicus*). At lunch we became friends of the blue crowned Motmot (*Momotus momota*), and here we saw a Cinnamon hummingbird (*Amazilia rutila*). Another rare hummingbird was seen on the grounds of the Hacienda Inn. In all 101 species were seen.

Visiting the ruins of Chichen Itza we lunched at a 17th century colonial hacienda complete with lush tropical gardens. We journeyed to Dzibilchaltun (which means place where there is writing) an interesting and longest used Mayan site known, started in 600 B.C. Most interesting of all ruins was Uxmal. The name means thrice build, but somebody can't count very well for there are at least 5 different rebuildings. Lunch was at another magnificent colonial hacienda. We returned for the splendor of the Light and Sound Show.

Shopping in Merida was great fun, and we returned with embroidered blouses, Panama hats, Guayabera shirts and hammocks.

Those taking advantage of the first St. Louis Audubon International Adventure were: Carl and Julia Otto, Veda and Victor Douglas, Caroline and Joe Fischman, the Gene Landesmans, the Walter Beckers, Cynthia and Ben Roth, Pat and Pete Hobson, the Walter Kloppes, Laura Sprague and Dora Tickner, Katherine Chambers and Lucille Woerther, Zoe Desloge Lippman and Barbara Lawton, Joan Rosen and Betsy Nimock, Martin and Francy Schweig, Gertruce Lucas, Olive Belamer, Tom Brooks and Connie Hath, Tour Director.

This tour, not offered by any travel agency, will be repeated in March of 1981. It will be extended one or two days to include a house and garden tour in Merida, and a "night on the town" to see native culture and dances. The ground package will be the same--\$400 plus a \$50 contribution to the Audubon Society and air fare. This tour will be strictly limited to 15. MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW with a check for \$50 to the St. Louis Audubon Society, 2109 Briargate Lane, 63122.



Chichen Itza — General view.



PHOTOGRAPHY SECTION

The Photography Section of the St. Louis Audubon Society begins the 1980-81 season with annual SHOW AND TELL NIGHT, Tuesday, October 7th at 7:45 p.m., in the auditorium of the Clayton-Federal Savings and Loan at Elm and Lockwood, Webster Groves.

Everyone invited! You may bring 8 slides to show. If you have prints bring them for display. Share your photographic experiences with the rest of us. You alone will handle your slides. You'll put them into a carousel reel for projection, and you'll remove them after the showing. Be prepared to tell where, when and how you too your pictures.

There will be an election of officers for the Photography Section at this meeting. Don't miss this important meeting, exchange vacation "stories", and greet old and new friends. Hosts: Ed and Lee Mason.

LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

by-Lee F. Mason

Now is landscape photography time. The term "landscape photography" is quite encompassing - may be of a city skyline, a stretch of desert or prairie, a view of the mountains or just the peaks, seascapes, lakescapes, stretches of river, and even skyscapes. Landscape photography takes in so much in a view that a shot made without planning and attention to detail might be very disappointing. What your eye sees is not necessarily what your camera will record.

Overexposure can make a rich blue, cloud studded sky photograph washed out and thin. The impressive mountain peak you admire may reduce to a tiny shape far, far away unless you use a telephoto lens. A gorgeous wildflower may look quite insignificant on film without the use of a closeup lens. But all these things have technical solutions: take careful readings for exposures; remember that on film your subject will look even farther away than it does to your eye; and to get the full impact of the detail in small subjects you have to get CLOSE to them with your photographic equipment.

Even more important than the use of auxiliary photographic equipment (wide angle, telephoto, macro, or close-up lenses) is the use of COMPOSITION and LIGHTING. Don't simply assume you have little control in photographing a landscape. You most certainly do! Don't think of landscapes as great broad broad vistas where all elements are of equal interest. If your landscape includes an interesting shape or element (like a mountain peak or waterfall),

look for ways to emphasize it in your photograph. Shifting your position from right, left, up or down may be all that is needed. Or a wide-angle or telephoto lens may be the answer.

Most good landscape photos convey a sense of depth. One way to accomplish this is to show a vanishing ribbon of highway, a disappearing river, a fence or hedge dwindling away. Objects in the foreground of your picture (tree branches hanging, entranceways, rocks, etc.) can establish depth and frame the scene. A low horizon in your scene gives a feeling of s-p-a-c-e. A horizon near the top of your photo emphasizes an intimate view.

In photography you are "painting with light". Light is your all-important tool. Early and late in the day the slant of the light casts LONG shadows giving your photo a 3-dimensional aspect. Side-lighting and back-lighting reveal textures and contours. BUT care must be taken in using back-lighting (where the source of your light is directly opposite the camera) to avoid light flares by having the light source shining into the lens. This can be avoided by a lens shade, by holding a hat over the lens, or by tilting the camera. Try to avoid taking pictures when the sun is directly overhead (noon). The light is then harsh and shadows are short. These tend to flatten the scene.

If the contrast between the bright and dark area of a scene is too pronounced, you can expose for one or the other. If you do this, then be sure the light area or the dark area (whichever you expose for) dominates the scene and carries the interest. If both areas are of equal importance, then take an exposure reading of the bright portion and of the dark portion and if the two are not more than 3 stops apart, split the difference in setting your aperture. You should get a reasonably good exposure in both areas.

Large stretches of sand or snow can fool your exposure meter to recommend an underexposure. Under such conditions open 1 stop to correct this fallibility of exposure meters

For your landscapes you will want the greatest depth of field; that is, getting the most of the scene in sharp focus. Using the smallest aperture will maximize the depth of field. To gain foreground sharpness do not simply set infinity on the center mark of your lens. Rotate the lens's distance ring so that the infinity mark matches the camera's aperture on the scale - this lets you gain foreground sharpness without losing background clarity.

While good landscapes can be taken with the normal 50 or 55 mm lenses that come with most single lens reflex cameras, SLR users will find that other optional lenses can greatly enhance landscape photography. A wide-angle lens with a focal length between 24 and 35 mm (we use 35 mm) is exceptionally well suited to landscape work. A telephoto lens is useful when wishing to bring a prominent feature to the fore in a landscape. A lens with a focal length between 85 and 135 mm is superior for landscape work, because its depth of field is less restricted than that of longer lenses. A zoom lens ranging from wide-angle to medium telephoto is another approach.

Filters are very useful in landscape work. A skylight filter will improve the rendition of long distance outdoor shots. It reduces excess blue in color photography. Medium-long shots and close-ups involving open shade under a clear blue sky are much improved with the use of a skylight filter. Many landscape photographers keep a skylight filter on their lenses all the time as protection for the lenses. The skylight filter requires no increase in exposure. A natural density filter will reduce the exposure when high speed film is being used. A polarizing filter is a "jewel" in landscape photography and general outdoor color photography. It eliminates glare and reflections from shiny surfaces, and other metallic ones. A pale blue sky is made darker; white clouds stand out. Color saturation is increased. Helps reduce haze. Polarizing filters require additional exposure, usually about 2 stops open. Be aware that a polarizing filter reduces the reflection on water and "flattens" it.

While a tripod is not essential in landscape photography, it will assure you of the best pictures. Always use a cable release for smooth shutter operation. When hand-holding your camera while taking a picture, brace your elbows against your body and hold your breath at the instant you trip the shutter. It is not recommended that you try hand-holding a telephoto lens longer than 135 mm. For longer telephotos be sure to use a tripod.



The Saint Louis Audubon Society is deeply indebted to S. E. Freund for support of the SOAR Project. Through The Harry Freund Memorial Foundation a grant of \$6,000 has been given the Society to support the research of Bill Voelker in eagle propagation. This is a one year grant and is to be paid quarterly. We express gratitude from all Audubon members and friends.

JUNIOR AUDUBON NEWS

by Beverly J. Letchworth



ANYTHING GOES

While on a picnic we toss a plastic bag and an aluminum can in the woods instead of putting them in a trash can. How long does it take this litter to decompose? Longer than you think.

orange peel takes from 2 weeks to 5 months to decompose.

plastic-coated paper takes from 1-5 years to decompose.

plastic bags takes from 10-20 years

plastic film--from 20-30 years

nylon fabrics--from 30-40 years

aluminum cans--from 80-100 years

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WILDLIFE TRAILS

Now that it's fall, the days are becoming colder. Suddenly it seems, you don't notice any insects buzzing around your head or taking a nip out of your arm. Where are they now that winter is coming?

FLIES die but they leave behind thousands of long white eggs that wait out the winter in piles of decaying plants and manure. In spring new flies will hatch.

ANTS hibernate in their underground tunnels and when warm spring days come again, they will be as active as ever.

Some BUTTERFLIES hibernate, some die after laying their eggs and others, like the monarch, migrate south.

Most MOSQUITOS die when winter comes, but they leave behind many eggs. Some female adults will live out the cold months in logs or caves.

HONEYBEES live all winter long in their hive. When temperatures fall to about 56°F, the bees form a big ball in their hive and feed on their stored honey. They constantly change places in the ball; the ones in the warm center move outward so that the bees in the colder outer sections can move inward to warm up.



UPBEAT

! Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy 75 years to Audubon Society
and the Dept. of Agriculture's
Forest Service!

To help celebrate you can plant a tree. The Forest Service's goal is to plant 76 million more trees in 1980 than were planted in 1979. So mark your birthday or other special occasions by planting a living, lasting gift for yourself as well as your country.

! Sad news, but . . . in this country alone there are 221 animals and plants on the verge of extinction.

! Recently a trophy hunter was given one of the most severe sentences ever handed out in the Southwest for a wildlife law violation. The hunter was fined \$10,000 and given a two-year suspension of hunting, fishing and trapping privileges for having an illegal state permit and for taking the animal he killed across the California state line. This hunter also substituted a larger set of horns by taking them from another animal.



OFFBEAT

Here are some interesting facts that are fun to know . . .

- * The tufted titmice so love animal fur for lining their nest that they will actually approach a living animal and pull hair right off its back.
- * Bats aren't the only ones who get around by using echolocation. Some North American shrews use this method too for traveling their dark tunnels. Giving off ultrasonic bleeps they can "hear" obstacles in their path and even know when their passageways curve.
- * Squirrels can smell a nut they buried through several inches of snow and soil and also know if the nut is whole, empty or wormy.
- * The varying hare is the fastest of all forest mammals. It can cover 30 miles an hour or more and can leap 12 feet in a single jump.
- * A robin can eat 14 feet of worms a day.

#####



GAME FUN

Can you unscramble the names of these birds?

1. n l a d i r a c
2. k c o m g n i d r i b
3. r p s a w o r
4. v o e d
5. b n i r o
6. s l t i a r n g



Answers: cardinal, mockingbird,
sparrow, dove, robin,
starling

JUNIOR AUDUBON NEWS

by Beverly J. Letchworth

ANYTHING GOES

If John James Audubon were alive today and could pick his favorite baseball players, I bet he would choose:

ANDY SWAN

CHICKEN STANLEY

GOOSE GOSLIN

JOHNNY PEACOCK

ROBIN ROBERTS

BILL EAGLE

JIGGS PARROTT

DUCKY MEDWICK

BIRDIE TEBBETTS

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WILDLIFE TRAILS

Let's investigate a meadow. L-O-O-K carefully along the ground . . .

VERY SOON WE FIND A LITTLE ROUND NEST OF WOVEN GRASSES IN A CLUMP OF WEEDS. THIS NEST BELONGS TO THE VOLE, ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST NUMEROUS CREATURES. THE MOST COMMON ARE THE MEADOW MICE OR FIELD MICE.

These animals weigh only 1/10 of an ounce when they are born and are so transparent, you can see their blood vessels inside them. But within two weeks they are grown enough to be out on their own.

THEY THEN BUILD THEIR NESTS EITHER UNDERGROUND OR ON THE SURFACE AND ARE KEPT BUSY MAKING A NETWORK OF TINY NARROW PATHWAYS AMONGST THE WEEDS AND GRASSES.

Voles can have up to 17 litters during one year, with an average of 5-9 young per litter. About every four years the vole population increases until the mice swarm over large portions of land, and a person walking would have trouble NOT stepping on them. Finally disease usually reduces their numbers.

VOLES ARE PREYED UPON BY MANY ANIMALS AND LUCKY IS THE MOUSE WHO REACHES ITS FIRST BIRTHDAY. BUT DESPITE THE DANGERS THAT FACE THEM, VOLES ARE VERY HARDY. COLD, RAIN, SNOW OR STARVATION THAT WOULD KILL OTHER TYPES OF MICE DO NOT SEEM TO BOTHER THEM AT ALL.

So next time when you look out over a field or meadow, you can be sure that in clumps of grasses and weeds, many voles are making their homes.

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Art by Lynne Letchworth



UPBEAT

! The U.S. Congress may soon pass a bill restricting the importation of African elephants or their parts, especially ivory. This will help stop the killing of elephants for their tusks.

! It has been discovered just recently that the little desert ant from Tunisia has color vision far superior to any other insect tested and even better in some ways to that of humans. It can see colors in the ultraviolet region of the spectrum that are invisible to us. In places that seem pitch black to human beings, this ant can see a full range of colors.

! Wildlife killed on roads have decreased 56% since our nation adopted the new 55 mph speed limit in 1974.

! Conservationists are worried about the Desert Bighorn Sheep, feeling that we may lose these animals within the next 100 years if we don't try and save their habitat. These sheep need space and isolation to breed and live successfully, and research is being done to try and find a way to help them.



OFFBEAT

Here are some interesting facts that are fun to know.

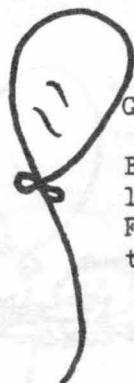
* The loudest noise ever recorded on the earth was the sound of the eruption of the volcano Krakatoa in the Eastern Archipelago in 1883. The sound was heard 3000 miles away, and it is estimated that the noise must have been heard over 7% of the earth's surface.

* Antlered hoofed animals are different than horned ones in that antlers grow only on male animals and are shed each year while horns are permanent.

* Temperatures deep within the interior of the sun are around 25 million degrees Fahrenheit.

* One of the world's tallest cacti is the saguaro which reaches 50 feet in height, taking 250 years to do so.

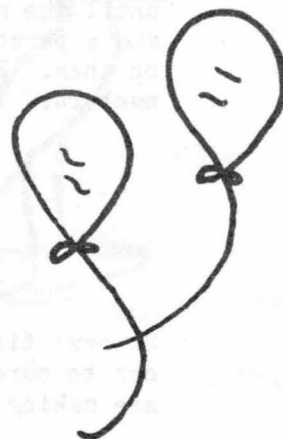
* If killdeer can not cool off their eggs enough by shading them with their bodies, they go to a nearby pond, soak themselves and return to the nest to place their cool wet bellies against the eggs.



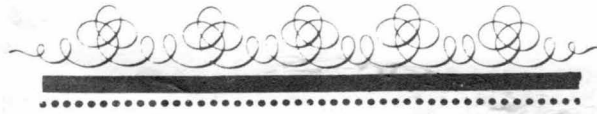
GAME FUN

Below is a list of common, everyday words. But you can add one or more letters to the end of each word to make the name of an animal or bird. For example--the word BAD will become BADGER by following it with the three letters GER.

1. PAN _____
2. MONK _____
3. FIN _____
4. GO _____
5. DIP _____
6. KING _____



Answers: 1. panda 2. monkey 3. finch 4. goat, gopher, gorilla 5. dipper 6. kingfisher, kinglet



IN MEMORIUM

Mrs. Louis Brenner
Kirkwood, Missouri

Irene was formerly Executive Secretary of the Saint Louis Audubon Society. She is survived by her husband, Louis, who was for many years editor of The Bulletin.

Charles Terry
Crescent, Missouri

Charles was the son of the late Dr. Robert James Terry, one of the founders of the St. Louis Bird Club, later the Saint Louis Audubon Society. He is survived by his wife, Florence.

Burrell L. Pickering
Foristell, Missouri

Burrell was the co-owner with his wife, Ruby, of Sunny Ranch where members and friends of the Saint Louis Audubon Society spent so many happy hours. He is survived by his wife, Ruby, and daughter, Gwenda Mathews.

These great conservation leaders will long be remembered and sorely missed by Audubon members and friends. Deepest sympathy is extended to members of their family.

Several years ago Elizabeth Golterman quoted the inscription on a sundial in the Churchyard of Bruton Parish in Williamsburg, Virginia which so well expresses our feelings. "The shadow fell for a moment upon that hour that marked his death, then passed, leaving his name and memory illuminated by the eternal sunshine".



CONGRATULATIONS

Mildred Philippi celebrated her 100th birthday on June 15 at the Bethesda-Dilworth where she is living comfortably. Mildred is the daughter of the Dean of Missouri ornithology, Otto Widmann. Dr. Widmann was the author of "A Preliminary Catalog of the Birds of Missouri", published in 1907.

Saint Louis Audubon Society
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CONNIE HATH, EDITOR

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!NOTICE!

SAINT LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY APPOINTMENT CALENDAR FOR 1981

Photographs and descriptive copy by Karl H. and Stephen Maslowski

Karl and his son Stephen have worked together as a team for many years filming wildlife in all parts of the United States, the Arctic, East and South Africa and the Caribbean. Their still photos have appeared in or on over one thousand newspapers, magazines, books, post cards, etc.

Members of our Society remember them best for visits to Saint Louis as speakers for the Wildlife Film Series. And now you have the opportunity of having a calendar showing twelve of their best photographs and educational text for each bird of the month.

This is a limited edition for us, and only 200 copies are available. You may pick up your calendar at the Wildlife Film Series meetings or order direct from Saint Louis Audubon Society. Calendars at the film showings will be \$2.00 each and by mail enclose your check for \$2.50.

The calendars are large enough for appointment use, and each month is marked with an 11 x 9 full colored photograph and a most comprehensive text giving size of the bird, range, nest and eggs, and habitat.

